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CIVIL WAR MEMORIES

OF

LEWIS A. STIMSON, M. D.





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SET DOWN BY HIM DURING THE SUMMER OF 1914



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CIVIL WAR MEMORIES OF LEWIS A. STIMSON

My children, with more affection than good judgment I fancy, are somewhat insistent that I should endeavor to recall the incidents of my life so far as they are concerned with the Civil War. The memory of most of them is, I fear, hopelessly lost, and that of those that remain for the most part shadowy and indistinct. How should it be otherwise—fifty years and more ago. It is, I think, a matter of common observation, that of the strenuous days of life, the days of great events or great emotions, the things sharply held and pictured by memory are only trivialities, the utterly unimportant incidents, the smell of a flower, the adjustment of a strap, the expression on a face, perhaps at a moment when life or death was hanging in the balance. Thus, one day in North Carolina, when I had been sent during an attempted advance of our line to report on the condition and possibilities of the region beyond our right flank, I walked along the edge of a swampy thicket and started across a little road which ran through it. All was quiet, but as I

stepped into the road I saw on my left, within a hundred yards, an earthwork lined with troops, and at the same moment came a volley from them directed at me. As I jumped back behind the bushes, out of sight at least if not out of range, I saw, and memory holds very clearly the look of interest and perhaps anxious expectation on the face of a solitary picket, huddled in a hole he had dug in the sand, whom I had passed shortly before. Nothing else of that day remains in my mind. And on another very similar occasion, in front of Richmond, I was riding along the edge of a wood on our flank and crossed a road running into it. The appearance of the head of my horse apparently gave the signal for the discharge of a field piece stationed one hundred or two hundred yards distant in the woods, so that the first warning I had was the roar of the discharge and the rush of the shell past me; and all I remember is the odd look of my horse's ears—her only blemish—as they waved about in her frightened plunge. They looked like a mule's, and that is probably why I remember it, for I thought much of her and was sensitive to criticism of her.

And so it is. The weeks and months passed and left no memories but those of trivial incidents. It might perhaps be properly said that there was nothing but trivial, purely personal incidents. We subalterns knew nothing of the problems and the plans of those who controlled the movements. Our days and weeks and even months passed in

the comparative idleness of camp routine, and even in marches and engagements we saw little but the changes and incidents of our immediate environment. Who sees more of a battle than his own little part in it? And big as that part may seem to him, and big as it may be, indeed, in grave possibilities to him, its record is only a single little human document, one of hundreds or thousands like it.

Well, to begin at the beginning, I was a Sophomore at Yale College and I remember reading of the firing on Fort Sumter from a paper held in my mother's hands when I was at home during the spring vacation. Of the next three months, I remember nothing. I was back at college and much interested in my life there. Even of Bull Run, I remember very little: a vague recollection of unrest and humiliation, and only one thing stands out a little through the haze, a newspaper report that the "Black horse cavalry" had been annihilated in a charge, and a certain fierce joy thereat. Alas, there was no "Black horse cavalry" and no annihilation.

I cannot remember that the war weighed at all heavily on my mind or that I had any thought of taking part in it. Doubtless I did, in a boyish, indecisive way. It could hardly have been otherwise. Some of my companions went, to one side or the other, even in those first days, and I can recall seeing a classmate riding with his troop along Chapel Street. At that time—or was it

later?—we were grouped in squads and drilled, but it did not long hold its interest and soon lapsed.

I remember nothing of the next year, nothing to throw any light on our feelings, our emotions, our mental attitude. Of course, the war was much in our thoughts; the papers were filled with it, some of our companions were engaged in it, and all of us had friends or relatives in the army. But it was the period of organization, of preparation, and there was but little fighting, and we were young and full of our local interest. I must have felt the call to some extent, for in a letter to my father in the spring of 1862, which by some chance has been preserved, I mentioned that a friend has promised to obtain a commission for me when he next goes to Washington. I have entirely forgotten the incident, and probably it was one of many half-hearted attempts to go. I was only seventeen years old then (although of course I thought I was a man and able to take a man's part in anything) and was keenly interested in my college life, and the call for troops had been met and volunteering was not actively pushed. Indeed it must have been during this period that volunteering was stopped by orders from Washington on the ground that there were soldiers enough.

And so too with the next year, 1862–1863, the country had in a way settled down to war and life went on often regardless of it. The great events were rather infrequent, the gloom or the joy of one

day would be offset by the joy or the gloom of the next. Of course, we all read the papers constantly and talked much about the incidents, but I cannot recall that it weighed on us or even counted for much in our daily lives. The early business depression had been followed by great prosperity, prices rose but I think we all found life easier and spent money more freely. We had our little difficulties for a time with the lack of currency, even for many months using postage stamps and bronze tokens issued by business houses for change, but that passed with the issue of greenbacks, national bank notes, and fractional currency. We discussed, sometimes quite bitterly, with those of our democratic companions who opposed the government, and it must have been at this time that the term "copperhead" arose and was even so far accepted by some that they wore small copper tacks in their lapels. We detested their sentiments but we lived on friendly terms with them, and I can account for that only on the supposition that other interests mainly occupied us and hot political discussion was rare. Yet one or two such discussions stand out in memory even now quite clearly, and occasionally come to mind when I meet those who took part on the other side. The main fact seems to be that the condition of war had been accepted as almost normal, something that did not demand anything from us individually at the time, that we could wait until we had finished with college. Such

impulse as there was to join the army was rather the desire for adventure than the compulsion of the country's need.

So the time passed. McClellan's and Pope's reverses of the summer of 1862 were followed by the reassurance of Antietam, and the quiet of winter was broken only by the bloody repulse at Fredericksburg, but with the return of the active season and the approaching end of my college course came again the desire to join. In the six weeks' interval of idleness and freedom from college work, which in those days lay between Presentation Day and Commencement, I heard of a cavalry regiment to be raised in New Jersey and sought its prospective colonel with a request for a commission in it. He was a large-framed, rough-looking man, a foreigner, I think, and evidently was not favorably impressed by my eighteen-year-old appearance. He asked roughly if I thought I could handle "a lot of rough troopers," paid no attention to the reply that it might be managed if they would come one at a time, and dismissed me with the statement that if I would go out and raise a company, he would consider the question of a commission.

That did not suit me, for I was young, impatient, and cocky, but perhaps I might have engaged in it, had not my father (probably with the intention of side-tracking my martial ambition) offered me a trip to Europe. On the whole, it was just as well. The cavalry regiment did not materialize

until nearly a year later and was gobbled up in its entirety out in Tennessee shortly thereafter. It would have been for me a tedious road to an undesirable end.

There was much excitement at New Haven at that time over the drafts, and several incidents connected with it remain in my mind. As I said, we Seniors were free of all college duty, our course was ended, the disaster of Chancellorsville was only a month behind us, the need of men was visualized by the draft which was actually taking place before us, and I am sure that the question of joining the army must have presented itself to most of us. A considerable number of us went at that time, some of them as commissioned officers in the new colored regiments, and doubtless my application to the New Jersey Colonel of cavalry may be taken as an indication of a general impulse, more or less strong.

The draft for New Haven was conducted in the basement of the Old State House, now gone. It was orderly and quiet, and I remember seeing the father of one of my classmates rise and go out, saying as he went, "Well, as I have no more fish in that pot, I'll go home." He had just heard the names of his two sons called.

But while the actual drafting was quiet, the attitude of the city toward it was not. And in connection with it I witnessed the only New England "town meeting" that has ever come in my way. It was called—I do not know by what

agency or authority; but it was legal—to vote for an issue of \$500,000 of municipal bonds to supply substitutes for drafted citizens. A vast crowd collected on the Green in front of the State House at noon, an impassioned orator addressed them from the steps and closed with a demand that those in favor of the motion should say “Aye.” A great shout went up and he declared the motion carried. I was told, and I believe it, that that action committed the city to the outlay.

Meanwhile, on the outskirts of the crowd a little drama was enacting, under my eyes and in part with my assistance. A young man, who doubtless saw in the colored race the cause of all our woes, was impelled by his feelings to knock down and maltreat a member of that race who was standing quietly in the crowd and listening to the orator. A policeman chanced to be within sight and made for the aggressor; he fled, and the policeman and I after him, and he was brought to earth opposite the side entrance to the New Haven House. I was interested to see how quickly his struggles subsided when the policeman got the loop of a stout cord about his wrist and twisted it.

The bloody, murderous draft riots in New York at this time were followed by a feeble imitation in New Haven. It did not amount to much but kept us excited and alert. A company of troops was brought from Newport and lodged two or three blocks south-east from the College. On the evening after their arrival a mob marched through

the intermediate streets and it looked as if something might happen. Eager to see it, I went on a private scout and made my way through to the troops. As I neared the latter, I saw a man with a big saber dodging behind the trees. I dodged behind mine and we cautiously approached each other. He proved to be the owner of the house where the troops were stationed, out on his own scout to see what was likely to befall his property. We exchanged information and went back together to the house. There an excited young officer, with a trembling voice—from excitement, of course, not fear—warned me to look out for myself, for “when we fire, we shall know neither friend nor foe.” On inquiring, he told me, with some reluctance, that he had joined only the day before. The mob wandered off and I came home. Two or three of us sat late on the steps of South College and challenged all passers; but when one who was stopped by us proved to be Professor Thacher and politely thanked us for the care we were taking of the college property but suggested that we had better go to bed, we concluded we were overestimating our responsibilities and retired.

It must have been at this time that I saw in a shop window a huge pistol of unusual pattern, which I at once felt was absolutely essential to my equipment in those troublous times. Its price was \$6.00, but I did not have the money. A classmate, to whom I applied for the loan, refused

it on the ground that he had only enough money to take himself home, and added that even if he had it, he would not lend it to me for so foolish a purpose. The incident is trivial, but it throws a little light on my state of mind and development.

When I got back from Europe in the fall, the winter quiet was settling on our armies and I cannot remember any attempt on my part to join. But when the spring came, the feeling returned. I wanted to go, but to go with a commission, and to go without the delay of recruiting-camps and organization. So I wrote to General Hancock and asked for a position as Volunteer Aide on his staff. I had no acquaintance with him, no acquaintance with anyone who knew him, and I presume I selected him because he was about the most shining mark of the time in the army of the Potomac. It was some gall. The application was evidently misinterpreted as an attempt to get his autograph, for that was all it brought me. I presume he was getting many requests for his signature. I then turned to an acquaintance who had served in the army of the Potomac and he promised to forward my request to a General whom he knew, Major-General Birney of Hancock's corps. After long delays, for the army was fighting constantly and Birney must have had many other things on his mind, came from him the suggestion that I should seek a commission in a regiment which a former member of his staff

was raising in Pennsylvania. I went to see the officer but I remember nothing about the meeting. Doubtless, there was the same uncertainty about the completion of the organization, the same need to engage in recruiting, in short, the same disagreeableness which I wished to avoid. I do not remember the details, but ultimately, August, I think, Birney's acceptance of me came and I was off.

My first stop was at Wilmington, Delaware, to get a horse which I had bought from General Keyes and was there in the hands of a quartermaster. I got her, borrowed a saddle and bridle, and set off one hot afternoon for Delaware City, twelve or fifteen miles distant. The horse was fresh and eager after her long confinement, and after a futile struggle to subdue her impatience to a reasonable gait, I sat back and let her go. We reached Delaware City well ahead of time, but on dismounting I found that the upper part of the back of my trousers where it had rested against the cantle was adhering to me in an unpleasantly suggestive fashion. If an infantryman is only as good as his feet, a cavalryman is only as good as his seat, and it was clearly borne in upon me that I was not likely to be of much use as a cavalryman for some days. We got on a boat and spent the night going to Baltimore. The morning brought full realizations of my fears, and I rode up the streets of Baltimore cautiously and one-sidedly and did all my errands afoot. That even-

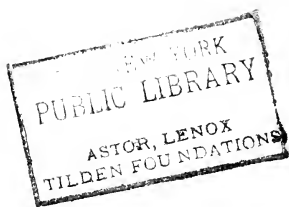
ing we embarked on the steamer for Fortress Monroe and landed there the next morning.

I do not recall the details, but the horse and I were landed at Bermuda Hundred from another boat after a day or two and set out across country to find General Birney. I remember viewing with some anxiety the possibility of a renewal of the mare's pernicious activity, when I had again to mount her. My tegumentary losses had been measurably repaired but they could easily be repeated. So I sought and found a wagon that was going to the corps, placed my valise, blankets, and myself within it, and with the bridle in my hand prepared to spare the mare the trouble of carrying me and to postpone the evil day. But she felt differently and refused to start when the wagon did, and after the bridle had broken in the effort to change her mind I was forced to mount her. All went well; she was content to walk, and in due time we reached the headquarters of the 10th Corps, and I presented myself to the General and was assigned to a tent and given a place in the mess. The General invited me to lunch with him and General Terry, who was calling at the time, and immediately thereafter started me out to visit Fort Harrison, an advanced work on the line, with two others of the staff, so that I might become acquainted with the region without delay.

Fort Harrison was a strong closed earthwork on a hill near the left end of our corps line which had been captured two or three days before when our



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line had been advanced and extended to the north. From it ran lines of earthworks north and south, occupied by our troops, and another unoccupied line straight west to the Confederate works a quarter or a third of a mile distant.

We three rode up into the fort and looked over the country. A few soldiers were sitting around in it, well covered by the parapet, but we, on horseback, were in plain view of our friends the enemy, and in a few moments some bullets came whistling by. Some of the enemy were practising with us for a target. I could see, in what my companions did and said, no particular reason for our presence there; they moved about a little and looked casually at the view. An officer strolled up and remarked that a staff officer had been "winged" there that morning while sitting on his horse, but my companions seemed uninterested in it. I thought it would not do for me to show any more interest than they did, but I was heartily relieved when one of them said, "Well, I guess we may as well go," and they turned away. It was my "baptism of fire" and had come before the taste of my first meal was stale on my tongue. I was content not to have shown the anxiety I felt, and later experience made me think my companions were not quite so indifferent as they seemed.

My tent companion was a very nice young man, one of the aides, but within a week or two his three-year enlistment ended and he left the army. I think it was immediately after his

departure that I became the tent-mate of the Assistant Adjutant-General, Lieutenant Shreve, and remained with him until shortly before our departure for Fort Fisher in December.

The 10th and 18th Corps constituted the bulk of the Army of the James under the command of General B. F. Butler, whose headquarters were at Bermuda Hundred. The 18th Corps, General Ord, occupied the portion of the line north of the James, next to the Bermuda Hundred line, and the 10th, General D. B. Birney, the remainder to the north, extending across the Newmarket road nearly to the Darbytown road, and the cavalry under General Kautz occupied the region beyond to the Charles City road. Richmond was five or six miles distant. To the rear of our right we later constructed several strong detached forts as a guard against attacks around the flank. Our base was at Deep Bottom, across the James from Bermuda Hundred.

General Birney came from Pennsylvania and was the son of a man very well known during the preceding decade or two as a pronounced and able abolitionist. He had a striking presence, intellectual, forceful, and rather austere. He had been brought shortly before from the command of a division in the 2nd (Hancock's) Corps and put in command of the 10th. He had been a successful commander and was known as a hard and persistent fighter, and if he is to be judged by what I saw of his behavior in the first heavy engagement

after I joined, he was actually indifferent to exposure of himself or others. It was on the 7th of October. Longstreet came out with two divisions, fell upon our cavalry and, in the language of Grant's report "drove it back with heavy loss in killed, wounded, and prisoners and the loss of all the artillery, nine pieces. This he followed up by an attack upon our intrenched infantry line but was repelled with severe slaughter." Grant is wrong about the "intrenched infantry line." The attack was made squarely against the flank and to its rear, and the men in the earthworks were not engaged. Birney had formed his line, infantry and artillery, straight back parallel to the Newmarket road from the end of our intrenchment, and met and repulsed the attack in the open.

The event came shortly after breakfast; there was much hurrying and scurrying, as it seemed to me; we, the General and staff, rode to the line, watched the firing, and I remember dimly the wounded men lying about, and in particular one handsome horse that had lost a foreleg and stood looking, as it seemed to me, wistfully about as if wondering what had happened and why no one came to care for him. Then we moved back a little and the General with us in his train rode slowly back and forth across a broad open plain. Once or twice, at the turn near the earthworks he dismounted and lay down under a brush shelter, for he was just coming down with the fever that ended his life a

few weeks afterwards. The enemy's artillery was in plain sight on rising ground to the north and we were in plain sight to them. And we were rather a large body: the full staff and the cavalry escort of fifty or one hundred men. Some of their shot seemed to be aimed at us; some passed over us, directly or after a ricochet, and I remember laughing to see how the men seated in the works with their backs against them and looking toward the guns, would simultaneously duck their heads over a length of perhaps a hundred yards when a shot would pass over them or sometimes even strike the mound close above them.

Why Birney should lead us up and down in this way no one seemed to know, and several mutteringly wondered why. But he paid not the slightest attention to the shots and continued the promenade for upward of an hour. And we lost several men during it. As the riding up and down continued, I noticed that I was almost all the time on the windward side, so to speak, of the procession. Thinking that was odd, for in turning I ought to come to leeward, I began to look for the reason. It was very plain. We were riding three or four abreast, and I found the man on the exposed flank would check his horse a little and then come up in line again but to leeward. And this was going on quite steadily. I inferred that there was still some anxiety in the breasts of the veterans that matched my own.

Soon after this General Birney was taken home

ill and General Terry, commanding the first division, took command of the corps. My recollections of the events of the next three months are vague. There were one or two renewals, less vigorous, of the assault on our flank, and several times we moved out to the right and attacked the enemy, but my recollection is that none of the attacks was a serious attempt to carry the works. We were sent out to "make a demonstration," while the real attack was on the left flank of the line, thirty miles distant. Nevertheless, the assault was pushed close up to the enemy's works and was accompanied by severe losses. In one of them Major Camp, of a Connecticut regiment, whom I had known as a Senior at Yale when I was a Freshman, was killed. I well remember that the chaplain of his regiment, Trumbull, I think, came to headquarters in the evening and told us, with much emotion, of his death, and how Camp had told him as the line was preparing to move forward that he was sure he would be killed, and how he, Trumbull, moved forward with him for a few minutes talking earnestly on the subject. Camp's body was sent back to us, stripped naked, and without the heavy gold ring he wore, made from the coin he had won as a member of the Yale Varsity crew in the second day's racing against Harvard at Worcester in 1859 or 1860. It is interesting, as an indication of the almost fratricidal character of the war, that another member of the '59 crew, Robert Stiles,

was at this time a major in Longstreet's corps which held the lines in front of us. And I remember that once while taking a flag of truce out on the Newmarket road I met a young officer who knew two of my classmates who had left us in '61 to join the South and was able to give me news of them. It was on this occasion that an elderly lady, whom I was delivering across the line, burst into tears while I was talking to this young officer and cried out, "Oh, boys, boys, throw down your swords and go back to your books!"

These flags of truce were always friendly and at times even cordial and frank. In one of them I sat for half an hour by the roadside while waiting for the answer to the communication I bore, talking with the Confederate officer who had met me. He was much older than I, and talked all the time, quietly and with no sign of any diminution of his determination to see the thing through, of his family and their privation, and of his regret that the war had ever begun. The meetings were not infrequent and were generally due to the desire of some woman to be passed through to the South. They always took place on the Newmarket road. The opposing earthworks were not far apart, and the pickets were quite close together, but never fired at each other. We would display a large white flag at the road and advance slowly down it until the Confederate picket or officer was met, and then sit down and await their pleasure. And, as I said, our interviews

were always friendly and sometimes even jocose. Thus, one day, the Confederate officer suggested we should send over to them the field and staff of a certain regiment of ours, adding with a smile that they had already acquired by desertion almost all the rest of the regiment. It was a shrewd thrust, for the subject was a sore one with us for reasons which I may mention later.

These assaults and attacks were of course most interesting to me, for everything was new and I was constantly gathering novel experiences and sensations. As I sit back and search my memory, long-forgotten little incidents come back to me and even some little recollection of thoughts and sensations. But they are all slight and trivial, not worth jotting down except as idle conversation and perhaps as giving some faint idea of the life. Some of the engagements were quite sharp and all were practically upon the same ground, that lying on both sides of the Darbytown road. It was largely open ground, with scattered woods, and bordered on the west by thick continuous woods, a short distance within which were the Confederate intrenchments. We would move out to the north, deploy in the open ground, drive in the pickets, and advance into the woods until stopped by the intrenchments. Only once or twice, so far as I recollect, was an effort made to carry the intrenched lines; ordinarily we would simply "demonstrate" before them, that is, stand up to be shot at, and come back home in the

late afternoon. There was enough firing—shot, shell, and bullets—to keep us thoughtful and I noted with much relief that my companions were as thoughtful as I was. It was quite noticeable, the hush that would come as we rode up into the zone of firing. I don't mean that anyone flinched, but they all grew quiet. And they had all been at it for three years, and many had been wounded. I remember one of them wore a jacket with six holes in it, where a bullet had passed through both his arms and his body; another, Captain Graves, the senior aide, had fallen at the end of the second day at Gettysburg in Sickles's corps with a bullet through the thigh; a third, our signal officer, had been shot in the foot; he had been in the first battle of Bull Run and told me a curious incident. He was a private in the N. Y. Highlander Regiment and the regiment, which was supporting a battery, fled when the rout came. He said: "I was angry and ashamed to run, and I made up my mind to stay and be shot. One other man stayed with me. All was quiet for five or ten minutes. I could see the rebels creeping up across the field, and when they got up to a rail fence just in front of me, one of them, he was old enough to be my father, peered at me and then slowly took aim at me. I just stood up straight and faced him. His gun missed fire. Then something seemed to snap in me. I instantly fired at him, threw down my gun, and ran like a deer, and I don't know when or where I stopped."

I remember too that on one of the first days when we were pressing up against the enemy's works beyond our flank and were close up by the line of battle, a bullet struck a horse near me and then my foot as I sat in the saddle. It did me no harm, but the sound it made or my movement to examine the foot led to a question by someone and to my explanation. To my surprise the item was passed along, and two or three of the staff whom I knew very slightly and who could have had no personal interest in me, came over to me and inquired about it. I think it was simply the fact that one of the party had been hit that interested them, that instead of me, the bullet might have found one of them. It is to be borne in mind that during much of these periods of exposure we were unoccupied, simply standing and waiting, and it is not strange that the mind under such circumstances should be occupied with the possibilities of the body's environment. On one of these days, I think it must have been the first and most severe one, October 13th, we had ridden close up to the line at General Hawley's brigade and were talking with him when violent musketry firing came from the enemy directly opposite. We were dismounted at the time, the horses a little in the rear, and the word was passed to lie down. As it happened, General Terry lay down between my legs and I remember feeling keenly that in that arrangement rank was not properly regarded. He should have been in front. The bullets buzzed

over us, and the twigs fell on us, and when the fire slackened we rose and went back to the horses. I had in mind a remark made by a major-general, a regular army officer, who had seen much fighting on the Plains as well as in the war, "The man who won't take the shelter of a blade of grass when it is offered him is a — fool," and I was looking for the blade of grass. I had decided that a horse was as good as the grass and skipping to get behind one when I caught sight of the face of a stolid, old orderly, who was holding three horses. His face was expressionless, but his eyes were following me, and I realized that, while the advice might be sound as to shelter offered, it was not to be extended to a search therefor, at least by one whose rank required him to set an example. And then, too, one gets to think it is not worth while, or has a superstitious feeling that the effort to avoid increases the chance of harm. At that very time, when a moment later I stepped toward my horse to mount, a shell passed directly under her belly. If I had taken position behind her I should have been right in its track.

One of my friends, who served through the war and was severely wounded and thrown from his horse while in command of his regiment at Chickamauga told me, in reply to my question why he was on horseback at such a time, that he always went mounted in action, for he was convinced that if he went on foot and once got behind a tree he would never leave the shelter. And yet he told me

at another time, and others have said the same thing, that once engaged and actively busied with the handling of his men, all thought of personal danger passed from his mind. General Schofield in his memoirs says the same thing of himself in his first battle. I believe that almost every man when moving up into danger is more or less preoccupied by it. And indeed, I have not much confidence in the so-called constitutionally brave man, the man who does not think of danger. Let him once get scared and the chances are he will be scared through and through and without control of himself. The man who appreciates the danger and faces it is the one who can be trusted to keep going. There are of course the constitutionally cowardly, the men who are actually beside themselves in the presence of danger, but they are few. I saw one of them on one of those Darbytown road days. He was a recruit, just down from the North, one of the men the Government was paying a bounty of \$1000 or \$1500 for, and who are drawing pensions still. We had spent the night in the field, and the next morning something was said at headquarters about a man who had behaved strangely the day before: he had fallen out of the ranks and had since been in the hands of the provost guard. He was sent for and came up pale and trembling. He said he had just come down from New York; he had marched out in the morning and was all right until the order was given to load, and after that he remembered nothing.

In the silence that followed his statement an officer spoke, "Oh, send him out to Colonel Curtis and have him shot." The man gasped, threw up his hands, and fell straight back in a dead faint. He was kept thereafter in the provost marshal's gang of men under punishment and employed in chores about the camp, and I saw him occasionally during the next two or three months; once he passed by my tent when Colonel Curtis was sitting there with me, and Curtis spoke to him, not unkindly, cautioning him to do his work well; he replied tremblingly and turned so pale that I thought he would faint again.

Theoretically one's anxiety ought to be lessened by an appreciation of the rarity of the hits compared with the number of projectiles discharged. It is an old saying, somewhat fanciful, that it takes a man's weight in lead to kill him, but, alas, the first bullet may do the trick and the tally of wasted lead be made up afterwards. But still one does see from time to time very striking evidence of the relative immunity. I once watched a skirmish line cross a great field. The men ran across at a trot without firing a shot, perhaps a third of a mile, toward a line of rifle-pits on the opposite side occupied by a thin line of the enemy, who were firing at them continuously until they were nearly up and then retired to another line a short distance beyond. Only one man fell. And while our men were settling themselves under cover of the pits, their commanding officer rode rapidly up and

down the line, back and forth, zig-zagging about, and presumably giving his orders, while puffs of smoke all converging toward him were constantly coming from the enemy's rifle-pits along a length of, I should think, two hundred yards. Finally, he turned and galloped back unhurt.

I think it was that same day that I had a very singular experience, unique so far as my inquiries have gone. I had gone, or had been sent, off to a little eminence and was standing on a bank bordering a road, looking across a wide field toward woods occupied by the enemy. After I had been there a few moments, a battery of artillery galloped up behind me and stopped, preparing to unlimber. I glanced back at them and as I turned again toward the wood I heard the buzz of a bullet and saw what looked like a great bee coming straight at me. I instantly dropped in my tracks, and as I did so I heard the slap of the bullet and a man called out, "Come here, I am hit." It was an artilleryman, standing at the head of his horse about ten feet behind me. The bullet had struck a button on his coat and flattened on it. Shells are often easily visible, but I have yet to meet anyone who has seen a minie ball in flight. Of course its speed was largely lost.

As the season advanced, hostilities on both sides diminished and ceased. There were few duties: an occasional ride along the picket line on the flank, examinations of the roads and approaches in the same quarter with selection of a site for an

intrenchment to cover the crossing of a swamp, and the carrying of orders to the different commanders, when some explanation had to go with them. We were free to visit and gossip and exercise our horses. I had early acquired a second horse, a tough little strawberry roan that nothing could tire, and which was in some ways a far more satisfactory mount than my handsome ebullient mare. The latter, a dark brown Morgan, had much individuality and was conspicuously handsome, but better suited for the ballroom than the home circle. She was perfectly kind and gentle, and we became great friends, but she had only two gaits, a swift walk and a run, to which after much persuasion she ultimately added a most hygienic trot. She would never stand with her head to the wind, she always wanted to lead the procession, and she had a passion for bathing. All of these traits were embarrassing for a subaltern. If the staff gathered on some eminence while the General examined the prospect to windward or perhaps explained it to some visiting general, Fanny would quietly turn her back and mine upon them and face to the rear. If we were moving briskly across the country she kept me most of the time alongside of or a little ahead of the General. If we crossed a stream, I had to do it at full speed or she would lie down in it, and that led to many objurgations, for my companions did not like to be splashed. Once at Fort Fisher, when, riding across the sands, I started across what seemed to be a broad shallow pool of

salt water, without the slightest warning she went straight down under me. Thinking we had got into a deep hole, I slipped the reins over my arm and started to swim ashore. The water was not knee-deep, and a new pair of mouse-colored corduroys, the pride of my heart, were irretrievably ruined. Another time, at the end of a day's march, my darky reported with much alarm that he had "taken the mare down to water and she broke away and is swimming around in the branch." And she continued to do so for a quarter of an hour, and then came quietly out ready for supper. She was heartbreaking at times, but she was a dear.

One day I was sent to bring up a cavalry brigade. As I rode up to its commander and began to deliver my message, he fixed his eyes on Fanny and interrupted me with "Where did you get that mare? I didn't suppose General Keyes would ever part with her." She had no great speed, but she would jump anything that came in her way and generally with success. She also had a very sensitive mouth, and if any weight was put on the bridle, she would throw her head in the air and make quite an exhibition of herself. But she was so kind and bidable that I could almost always control her by my voice. She would follow me about and come to my call, and we spent a good deal of time together.

The other horse was small, with beautiful head and legs but a most unmanageable mane. He had

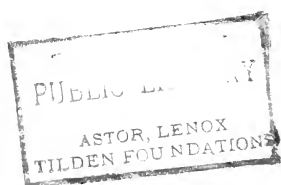
a swift easy trot and great endurance. I once rode him to an outpost ten miles distant and made the return trip without once breaking his trot. The orderly who accompanied me because guerillas occasionally appeared on the road was quite unable to keep up and at the last was left far behind.

The use of our horses for business or pleasure was a chief occupation of the aides, and when not on horseback we were idling about headquarters. I hardly remember how the days were spent except that in the evenings we all gathered about the large campfire in the open, with sometimes a band to furnish entertainment. The smell of that fire is still in my nostrils, and even now I never smell burning wood in the open that it does not instantly turn my thoughts back to those days. Just as when in 1898 I went to the camp at Montauk and the sight of the army wagons and the mule teams and the orderlies rushing about on horseback made me feel for a moment as though I must mount and be part and parcel of it again.

The duties were few and simple. Occasionally a ride to Deep Bottom to bring over a regiment or a brigade of new troops, a ride along the outposts to remind the men that they were under observation, another to meet and ceremoniously conduct some visiting general or a congressional committee, but most of the time it was a ride for the ride's sake or to visit some point of interest, like the canal that was digging at Dutch Gap.



1865



I recall an amusing incident connected with the visit of a committee headed by Senator Wilson, Chairman of the Committee on the Conduct of the War. The committee lunched with General Terry and issued from his little house to mount horses that had been collected for them for a ride along the lines. One of the horses was a mare belonging to Major Terry, our adjutant-general, a remarkably fine-gaited horse but with a very tender mouth. Wilson, a stout little man, appeared with his trousers tied about his ankles with red tape and was hoisted up on the horse. He gathered up the reins and pulled sharply on them. The mare rose straight up on her hind legs and the Senator slid down over her tail to the ground. Much excitement, of course, and many apologies; the offending mare was led away and the much-ruffled Senator mounted on another horse.

Dutch Gap was a perennial interest, for it lasted long in the making and much of the time there was firing from the enemy's large guns and mortars. The canal was so placed that the guns on the other side of the James could fire across its mouth and much of the time they would fire at the men as they brought out the clay in wheel-barrows and carts. The canal itself was completely sheltered from fire. It was cut through a neck of land about five hundred feet wide and forty feet high; it was of gray clay so stiff that the sides of the cut were almost vertical. The digging was begun at the

south end, and the very precipitous bank at the north end was left untouched until the excavation had been entirely completed behind it, so as to escape direct shelling from the opposite bank. A visit to it had to be made with some circumspection so as not to draw special fire. We would leave our horses out of sight and slip in around the exposed points when things were relatively quiet. The clay was very firm and tough. I remember bringing away a piece and carving it into a model of the canal as it then was. Indeed, I think it is still somewhere about the house, together with a pipe I also made of the clay.

As the season advanced, and it seemed probable we should remain where we were for the winter, we arranged more permanent quarters. Details of men from Maine regiments were set to build log huts, and they did it quickly and well. We scoured the country for bricks for the chimneys and occasionally found a serviceable window-sash, a great find, one to make its owner envied. I well remember the indignant murmurs with which the order was received to leave the sashes in place when, on the reconstruction of the corps, we had to leave our quarters and return to the 1st Division. There was much rivalry over the chimneys. And as mine did its work well, I was somewhat in demand when others were to be built or remade.

Some of the huts had floors, the planks coming from the abandoned houses that furnished the

bricks; I do not remember how we made the roofs, but I think we used the tent flies.

There were plenty of men to chop and bring wood for the fires, and we thought we were exceptionally well provided for. But for me the nights were a torment, for I have always slept cold. My companion slept in a buffalo-skin bag in a box and slept well. I lay on a canvas hospital stretcher and could never get blankets enough below and above to keep my hips and knees from aching like a tooth.

Of furniture we had little or nothing; sometimes an improvised table or bench or perhaps even a chair picked up somewhere. A post driven firmly in the ground outside held a tin washbasin, and we each must have possessed one or two towels. My washing was done, I presume, by my orderly; at least I cannot remember doing it myself. We took our meals in a large mess-tent, the food being supplied by a sutler at a fixed price per week. We had no books, and there was but little card playing. Some of the staff were well educated and well bred, and all were friendly and easy to live with. Late in the season a former classmate, Horace Fowler, came with his regiment, a N. Y. Heavy Artillery one, which had been brought up from Yorktown and equipped as infantry, much to their disgust, and I was able to have him detailed to the staff as Judge Advocate on the strength of his having studied law for one season. His company was of course a great pleasure.

Fresh troops, raised by the large bounties, came to us in considerable numbers, but the material was poor. Desertions were constant and there were a few executions of those who were caught. I attended one, and only one. The victim was a flagrant offender. He had enlisted eight times and pocketed eight bounties. He was a stout young fellow and looked like an ordinary city tough. He pretended to a good deal of unconcern and bravado during the two or three days of confinement, rode to the field with apparent indifference, seated according to the cruel fashion on his unpainted coffin, and stood at "attention" unblindfolded beside the ready grave, facing the firing squad. The latter did their work well, thanks to an energetic provost marshal, who stood behind them with a drawn pistol and the promise to shoot any man whose rifle deviated from the mark, and every bullet struck the man's chest. His body flew backward without a joint bending, and his cap striking the edge of the coffin flew high in the air.

A brigade notorious for its numerous desertions had been ordered out to witness the execution in the hope it might teach the men a lesson. It did, but not the expected one. That night it went on picket and ninety of the men deserted.

Such was some of our material, and I wish that those who pass our pension laws and to whom a deserter is only "a poor homesick lad" could appreciate it and could vote with an eye to their

duty to the country rather than to the vote at the next election.

About the first of December, the 10th and 18th Corps were broken up and recombined as the 24th and 25th, the latter being composed largely, perhaps exclusively, of colored troops and under the command of General Weitzel. General Ord took command of the 24th, in which General Terry had the 1st Division, and General Ames the 2nd. General Terry very kindly offered to get me a place on General Ord's staff, but I preferred to go with him to the 1st Division. If I had accepted I should probably have taken part in the breaking of the lines about Petersburg the next April, and the pursuit to Appomattox.

Shortly after this reorganization, our 2nd Division with, I think, the 3rd Division, General C. J. Paine, of the 25th (colored), was sent under Generals Butler and Weitzel to attack Fort Fisher at the mouth of the Cape Fear River, North Carolina. They made the landing, thought the fort impregnable, and returned. General Grant at once ordered the same troops, with General Hawley's brigade of our division, to renew the attempt, this time under the command of General Terry. We started, I think, December 31st. Unfortunately I had been a little ailing and the doctor said I should not go. I pleaded hard with the general but he was firm and told me to go home for a fortnight and rejoin him when I got well. It was a bitter disappointment. The troops

marched to City Point, we followed in the evening, and I took the boat to Fortress Monroe and home.

After some delay due to a storm, the force captured the fort, January 15th. Secretary Stanton came down to inspect (or to rejoice) immediately after the capture. He made our force into a corps and gave us the old number, 10th, with General Terry of course in command, and gave him a brigadier-generalcy in the regular army and distributed various other promotions. I was promised a commission from the general government of captain and A.D.C. It came to me at the close of the war while I was ill, and I declined it.

At the expiration of the fortnight I started back. At Fortress Monroe I found a transport carrying reinforcements and got passage on it.

The staff was occupying a small frame house outside the fort and were enjoying a mess supplemented by supplies obtained from two blockade runners which had just come in not knowing that the fort had been taken. The usual lights had been set and they ran in at night, anchored, and went to bed.

Our horses had not yet come, and the staff duty for a little while was irksome, for the sand was heavy and the roads poor. But the weather was balmy and the horses soon came. We had an intrenched line three miles to the north, extending from the river to the sea, or rather to an inlet which paralleled the shore, and the enemy held a line just beyond us. Three or four monitors lay

in the river and would occasionally throw a few shells at a fort farther up on the opposite side of the river. The land immediately in front of us was very swampy, practically impassable except along one or two small roads. We moved out once or twice and felt the enemy, and once sent quite a force by night up the coast, hoping to make a lodgment in their rear, but it could not get across the inlet. General Schofield's corps was brought from Nashville and about the middle of February it advanced on Wilmington along the west bank of the river, while we worked up on our side. There was but little opposition, nothing but heavy skirmish lines on our part and only occasional checks. Still, we had to move along so few roads and with so narrow a front that we had quite a number of casualties. At one check I was standing beside the road while a company was passing by to support the skirmish line; suddenly there came a roar and a bang and the head of the little column dissolved. An unexploded three-inch shell had come through the thicket and struck it squarely, knee-high, and knocked out five men. And I recall another incident: an unexpected volley had brought down a number of men, the doctors were hurried up, improvised operating tables, and set about their work. It was, though I did not know it, the beginning of my surgical career, for I asked a doctor why he was going to amputate an arm from which the back of the elbow had been shot away. "Why do you not leave it as it is?" I

asked, "The arm is still good and I should think he could get well of his smash as well as he could of an amputation." He snorted with scorn, and off came the limb. Nowadays, we should certainly save it, and I still think it might have been done then.

Surgery was rather elementary in those days and the difficulties of transport doubtless forced the surgeon's hand. But still there was much haste and scant study of the cases. One of our aides, Captain Graves, was shot at Gettysburg in the thigh at nightfall on the second day. He was taken to the field hospital, a surgeon came by, glanced at his wound, and said, "Amputate." While awaiting his turn, he saw a medical acquaintance passing and called to him, asking for at least an examination before condemnation. It proved to be simply a flesh wound and in a month he was back on duty.

On February 22d we entered Wilmington, still skirmishing, and pushed on to a river about ten miles beyond. Once or twice in this part we had to deploy, but there was no serious resistance. The enemy was encumbered by large numbers of our prisoners who had been brought to Wilmington as Sherman advanced through Georgia and South Carolina, and a few of them who had managed to escape on the way came out to us from the bushes as we passed along. They looked very miserable but it was nothing to what we saw a little later.

We established a strong outpost at the river and brought the main force back to Wilmington.

Our entry into Wilmington had some amusing incidents. An old man, carrying a white flag, apparently a tablecloth, came out to meet us and formally surrendered the city, but the dignity and the impressiveness of his behavior was sadly marred by the excitement of the swarms of negroes who filled the road about him and welcomed us with shouts of joy and thanksgiving. I remember one stout young woman with her back against the fence jumping up and down, waving her arms and emitting shrill cries.

With headquarters in the city, we were soon on polite terms with the population, female as well as male. Technically we were enemies, but youth will not be denied. On the first or second evening an appeal came in to save a family from their colored servants. I was sent on the mission. I found a circle of seven or eight ladies of various ages seated solemnly in the parlor. I inquired about the trouble and found it existed only in their imaginations; they feared it was coming, although there had been no indication of it. I asked that the potential disturbers of the peace should be summoned; a very mild looking man and woman came rather tremulously into my august presence, received some solemn advice, and departed with relief. We then sat about and talked for a while, and I went home. A few days afterwards I met one of the younger ladies and she took me to task

for having spoken to a still younger one in the street a day or two before. They had reproached the girl for having allowed me, an enemy, to do so, and she had defended herself on the score of proper courtesy. I had to explain that she had been imposed upon, that some other officer had impersonated me, or rather, had been mistaken by her for me. I fear she got another scolding.

Our headquarters were in a public building and we slept on the floor. One morning early I was waked by the entrance into my room of two men in Confederate uniform and conspicuous revolvers. I sat up in some bewilderment and asked their errand. They were two of Sherman's scouts who had just got through to us and wished to deliver their message. After that had been attended to, one of them said he would like to consult a doctor as he had a buckshot in his thigh. He said that a day or two before starting to come to us he and two companions were out looking about and came upon a party of home guards. "Jim took the left flank, and Joe the center, and I the right flank and we went at them with a yell. They ran like rabbits, all but one old man near me. I called on him to surrender and he lowered his gun. I looked around to see if there were any others and as I turned back he was drawing on me. I threw myself down on the horse and fired my revolver at him just as he fired, and one of his shot went right through my leg. And," reproachfully, "he was old enough to be my father."



1866



He told many other stories of reckless adventure and of daredeviltry of a similar kind. Of one I remember little more than a phrase. Clad in the uniform of a Confederate Major he met a body of Confederates, told them the enemy was near and approaching, took command of them, and hurriedly began preparations for defense. But he had not time enough. "Oh," he said, "if our men had only been a little later I'd have put up the prettiest little fight."

The most impressive thing that happened during our three weeks' stay in Wilmington was the reception of ten thousand of our prisoners turned over to us by General Hoke because he could no longer care for them. They had been gathered from various Southern prisons that lay within the line of Sherman's marches and had been herded along with the troops that were more or less closely opposing Sherman and us. They were brought by rail to the opposite bank of the river upon which we had our outpost, ten miles out from Wilmington, and we laid there a pontoon bridge for their crossing. We went out to meet them and it was one of the most trying scenes I ever witnessed. Many of them were so weak that we had to detail soldiers to help them up a little incline from the bank, and we had to camp them on the spot until conveyances could be gathered to take them to the town. As I was sitting on my horse watching them, a very ill-looking man came slowly toward me and said, "Can you tell me where I can find a doctor? I've

got a friend over there and he isn't very well." Poor fellow, he looked desperately in need of a doctor himself. We shipped north all who could bear the journey and placed the others—hundreds of them—in improvised hospitals in the town. They were in such condition, many with gangrenous limbs, that it was unpleasant to pass by the houses in which they lay. I remember seeing afterwards pictures in *Harper's Weekly*, I think, of some of their limbs, pictures hardly to be believed, feet fallen off and the bare bones of the leg sticking out beyond the flesh. And then too, of course, there was the inevitable typhoid. Our medical inspector, a man of whom I was very fond, but whose name I have forgotten,—he came from New Hampshire,—was placed in charge of these hospitals and on the morning that we marched away I hurriedly rode to his house to bid him good-by. He quietly said, "I am coming down with the fever, I feel it here," drawing his hand across his forehead. When I came to myself after my own fever a few weeks later, one of the first letters I read was from the lady at whose house he had been living, telling of his death.

We were anxiously awaiting news of Sherman, who was marching through the country west of us, and one Sunday morning I was called out of church and told that the General wanted me. He told me to go aboard a certain boat and proceed up the river and see if I could pick up any of Sherman's scouts who might be trying to work in to us.

“How far shall I go?” “As far as you think fit.” I went aboard and started on my independent command. The boat was a small paddle-wheel river craft with a captain, an old negro pilot, two deck-hands, and two or three in the engine room. All went well at first in the broad reaches, but when we reached the narrow and crooked part we had a hard time. The river was bank full and running fast; the turns were sharp and often double, so that before we could get the craft straightened out after one turn she would plunge her bow into the bank or the trees opposite. I worked at the wheel with the ducky, but the problem was not to be solved by strength. We soon lost a good part of our paddle boxes and all the standing poles and railings about the bows, and the captain all the time was in a twitter lest a rifle shot should come from the banks. By nightfall we had advanced about forty miles, and having reached a place where the river had broadly overflowed a low wooded district, I told the captain to tie up to the trees for the night. After supper I posted the two deck-hands, each with a rifle, and told them where to look for a coming onslaught, and then went to bed. Doubtless they did likewise soon after.

The night passed without alarms and we were soon on our way again. The river was straighter and the navigation was easier; and as we passed from time to time charred pieces of wood looking like the stringers of a bridge, I inferred that Sher-

man's men had reached the river above us and determined to keep going until I found them. Twice a man on horseback rode to the river bank where it rose in a bluff above us, and scrutinized us with interest, but no shots followed and we kept on. The captain sought to impress upon me the ease with which a rifle ball would put our boilers out of commission or empty the pilot house, but I was eager to see the thing through. In the afternoon he found compensation in hauling aboard a floating bale of cotton. I daresay it yielded him two or three hundred dollars. When ten or fifteen miles short of Fayetteville, we passed a group of our cavalymen on the river bank, and then I swung out a big flag at the stern, which I had prudently abstained from displaying before, and pushed on confidently.

About four o'clock we reached Fayetteville and found a pontoon bridge over which our troops were passing. We tied up to the bank and I set out to find Sherman. The road was filled with marching troops who showed interest, some of it articulate and personal, in my appearance and my corps badge which was new to them, and after walking about a mile I found the General in a dwelling house on the Arsenal grounds. He seemed contented and free from care and questioned me about our force at Wilmington, and apparently heard with pleasure that Schofield's corps had left us and had marched by the coast toward Newberne. He complained of the swarms of negroes, about

thirty thousand he said, that were accompanying him, and told many stories of them, and finally directed one of his officers to take me to General Howard and tell him to send back with me as many as my boat would carry. We crossed the pontoon bridge and found Howard in a tent. After a few words with him I went back to the boat, got a gangplank out and took on board about two hundred men, women, and children, and shortly before midnight started down the river. Our progress, with the stream, was far more rapid and we reached Wilmington by noon. Early in the morning we had an accident which just missed being very serious. As we swung around a sharp turn, our starboard quarter struck a rebel gunboat (the *Chickamauga*, I think) which had been run up the river and sunk when we occupied Wilmington. It made a hole in us nearly a foot in diameter just above the water-line.

Many other negroes were subsequently brought down and established in camp; under the care I suppose of the Freedmen's Bureau.

About the second week of March our corps left Wilmington and marched north beside the railway, our destination being a junction with Sherman at Cox's bridge, just out of Goldsboro, about seventy-five or one hundred miles, I think. The weather was pleasant, the road good, and no enemy in our front. They had withdrawn to combine with others under Johnston in opposing Sherman. The country was sparsely settled and we found only

women, children, and old or disabled men, men who had lost an arm or a leg in the war, and had returned to their homes. Extreme poverty was evident, and General Terry was very strict in preventing any looting. One day we were sitting on the porch of a little house during a halt; some shouts were heard and we saw some soldiers chasing a pig in a field across the road. The General drew his sword, bounded down the steps and across the road, and went for the men. They ran one way, and the pig another.

I think it was at the same place that a little girl who was standing near us suddenly threw up her arms and in a voice of the utmost despair cried, "Oh, they're in the smokehouse." A couple of soldiers were looking in at the door of a little shack that stood a few yards away from the house. It was a piteous cry; probably all the little food they had was in that shack.

One afternoon we found an engine and two cars at a way-station and thought to vary the march by taking a ride in them. An engineer and firemen were found, some soldiers loaded into one of the cars and we took places in the other, and away we went, sending our horses by the road. As we approached the next station we saw some armed men on horseback in front of it awaiting us. Our conductor could give no information. The last time he had been over the road, he said, the Confederates were there. We moved up slowly and stopped by them. They were an odd looking

bunch. One of them had a quilt under his saddle which covered his horse from neck to tail, and all were hung about with pots and pans and other domestic utensils. The men sat with their rifles in their hands quietly watching us. They were a small body of Sherman's "bummers," far away from their force. They said they were just waiting to see who we were, and apparently were quite indifferent whether we should materialize as Federals or Confederates. Then they turned and went off and we proceeded.

Sherman marched as a rule in four parallel columns five to fifteen miles apart, and stripped the intermediate and bordering country systematically. The men who did the work were regularly detailed and under the command of officers, but evidently there was some, perhaps much, irregular foraging and looting. Theoretically all plunder was turned over for equitable distribution, but I fancy there was little or no effort to prevent individual robbing or wanton destruction. When Schofield's corps came into Wilmington after their march up the west bank of the river I saw men in the ranks carrying the weirdest loads: one with an arm-chair, another with a mirror, etc. Of course, these things were dropped at the roadside in an hour or two. "War is hell," but the hellishness is not simply the slaughter and the physical destruction, it is also the corruption of character, the loosening of moral bonds, the utter disregard of right and wrong. I know it, for I felt

it in myself. It is the ready resort to violence, the arbitrament of force.

One evening we stopped at Faison's station for the night. An elderly gentleman came to headquarters and asked the General and his staff to take supper at his house, a little distance down the road, and to spend the night there, giving as his reason his desire to have our protection against the soldiers. We assured him he had nothing to fear, but he was urgent and we went. Two ladies were there, one, about thirty years old, whose husband was in the Confederate army, the other a girl of perhaps eighteen. They were quiet and courteous and the evening passed off pleasantly. The General and I stayed for the night, but the others were shy and went back to their blankets. The young girl and I spent the evening on the piazza like any other young couple. Of our conversation I recall only her story of a visit made to them the previous day by some of Sherman's men. They demanded her jewels, she said, and cursed her. "I don't mind swearing, but I don't like to be cursed."

In October, 1913, I lunched in the same house at the same table, with descendants of the same family and with one of the ladies mentioned on a following page.

A day or two later we reached Cox's bridge and united with Sherman. We heard the firing at Bentonville, Sherman's last battle, but took no part in it. There was much going and coming and some of Sherman's generals visited us, but I

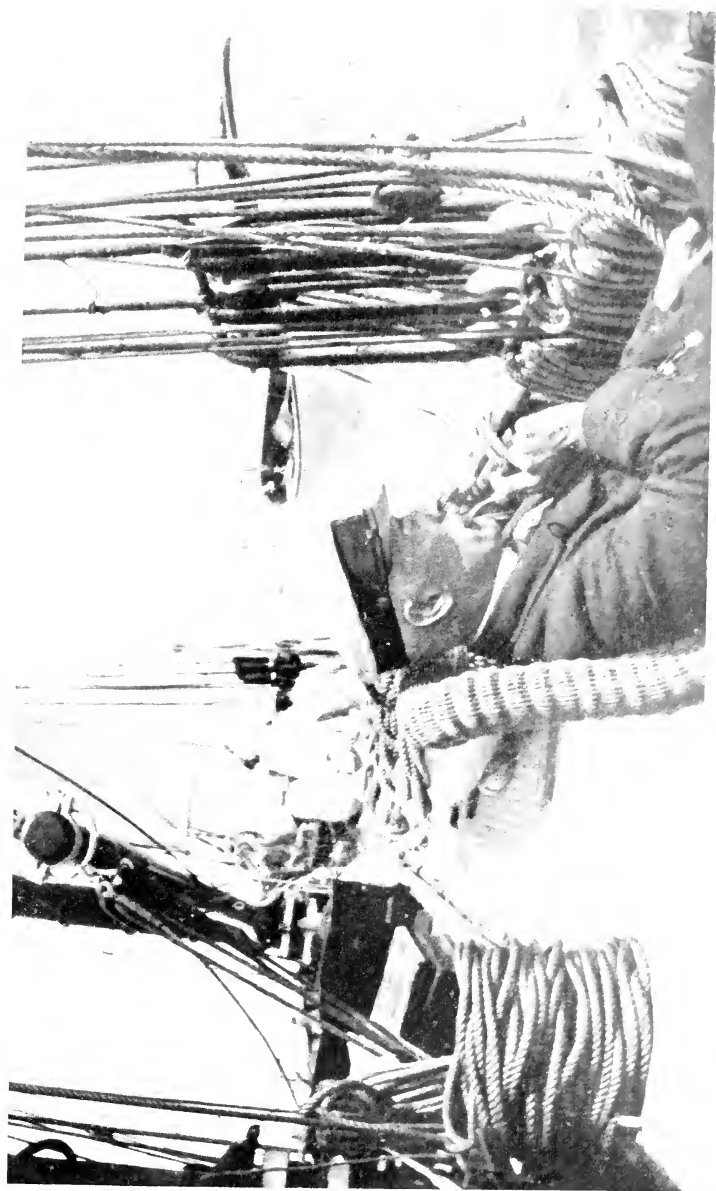
was ailing and took little part in it. Indeed, on the last marches I was so sick that whenever we stopped I got off my horse and lay on the ground until we started again. I had some quinine in powder which I used to try to bury in a bit of chewed bread so that I could swallow it without getting too much of the taste. That was my sole medical help. Then we were ordered back to Faisons to refit for the next campaign. I made the trip in the headquarters wagon with my darky leading my horses close behind, and when we reached the house selected for headquarters, I went directly upstairs and to bed, and stayed there until the corps started out again, a fortnight or so afterward.

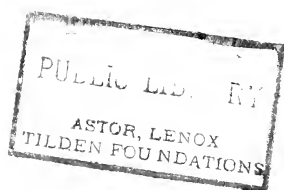
It was sickness under difficulty. We were four in the room, with one double bed. The next day I was delirious, and I think the others moved out and left me in quiet for a while. But as I grew better, the room came partly into use again as an office and I had a pretty hard time trying to get sleep. One evening after I had vainly sought sleep for an hour or more, I asked one of the staff who was reading at the table if he would not kindly take his book elsewhere. He refused and added that it was the most selfish request that had ever been made of him. We teach that the main treatment of typhoid is nursing and careful feeding. I got neither (my nurse was a private soldier and my food came from the staff table) and though I recovered my convalescence was prolonged for

months by a persistent enteritis. The doctors had said at first that I could not recover, and one of the staff had gone through my effects, found the family address, and written to them to send for my body. I well remember the pride with which one of the doctors, Doctor Craven, afterwards sat on the side of my bed, and told me that he alone had said that I would get well. Forty-eight and a half years afterwards I revisited the house and met there two elderly ladies, who had been young women there at the time and had pleasant recollections of General Terry and the staff. I went up to the room and saw there the same four-post bedstead.

When the time came for the corps to move, I was driven in a buggy to the railway and put in a box car with the other sick and some ladies and slowly journeyed back to Wilmington. They told me I was the second sickest on the train. The sickest, Doctor Washburn, from a New England State, died before we had been more than an hour on the way. His wife and brother, seeking him, learned at Fortress Monroe of his death (which I had told of when I stopped there on my way home) and came to Paterson a day or two after I got home to ask the details. I stayed at Wilmington a few days, boarding in a private house, and then got on a little steamer bound for New York. That same afternoon my brother Henry reached Wilmington via Newberne and Goldsboro in search of me.

My boat stopped at Fortress Monroe and I went





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ashore and met my optimistic Doctor Craven, who had just been stationed there and afterwards had charge of Jefferson Davis when he was confined there, and wrote a book about it. He introduced me to Captain Gadsden of the *Arago*, who had stopped there on his way back to New York with a party sent down to raise the flag again on Fort Sumter, and he kindly offered me passage on his boat, far more comfortable than the little freighter on which I had come from Wilmington. We sailed away in the afternoon and reached New York the next evening. I landed down on the west side at about Franklin or Worth Street, and for many years I used to recognize as I went up and down in the Sixth Avenue car the steps of a corner saloon on which I rested while waiting for a car to take me up to Fourteenth Street to the room where Keyes, then a medical student, was living. I passed the night on his sofa, and the next morning started for Paterson. It was a day of fasting and prayer. Lincoln's body had lain in state at the City Hall the day before, and all Broadway was draped in black. As I sat wearily in the ferryboat, my father came in. He had come to the city early to see if some boat might not have arrived from Wilmington (I must of course have written that I was on my way home) and noting in the paper the arrival of my freighter, had gone to it and learned that I had shifted to the *Arago*.

I had to go to bed again and was pretty sick for

some weeks. But by June or July I was about again and went to New Haven to visit General Terry, home on leave. After Johnston's surrender, he had been put in command of the district of Virginia with headquarters at Richmond, where I afterwards visited him again in October.

While I was lying ill at home, my commission as captain and A.D.C., came from Washington, and General Terry had offered to recommend me for a brevet as major, and for a commission in the regular army. But the war was over, and I had no desire to remain in the army. I was not well enough to go back to duty with any comfort and so, rather heedlessly, I declined the commission instead of accepting it and then resigning. I regret it now, because acceptance would have put my name on the army list. A small matter perhaps. As it stands my name appears on the record as having declined a commission, and is mentioned twice in the Official Record of the Rebellion, once in a letter written by Sherman from Fayetteville, in which he tells of my call on him, and once in a general order issued by General Terry at Raleigh, or just as we started for it, in the list of his staff. And the record was accepted by the Loyal Legion.

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